

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

January 26, 2016

A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on January 26, 2016, pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.

Board members present were Bernie Buonanno, Paul MacDonald, Jeff Hirsh and Stan Israel.

Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill RICCA; John McGinn, Amanda Wilmouth, Arlene Oliva, Melissa Avedisian and Diane Richards, RICC; Kristen Adamo and Tom Reil, PWCVB; Daniel Schwartz and Michael Gravison, VETS; Cheryl Cohen, John Ciolfi and Larry Lepore, RICC/DDC and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.

In the absence of Ms. Venturini, Mr. Buonanno called the meeting to order at 12:53 PM

Mr. Buonanno apologized for the confusion and said that Ms. Venturini had changed the date for the meeting because she was going to out of town but the change was not communicated to the Board. Mr. McCarvill conducted the meeting. He announced that the next meeting would be held on February 23, 2016 at 12:30 PM.

Conversations took place regarding the NCAA Basketball Tournament. Ms. Wilmouth noted that an instructional video was received with helpful information and how to participate in the Tournament. Mr. Lepore noted that metal detectors have been requested although they are not required by the NCAA. Mr. Lepore stated that we intend to have detectors installed prior to the games.

PWCVB

Mr. Reil began the PWCVB Power Point Presentation. Mr. Reil stated that for the month of December hotel rates were up 4.6% over the same time last year although occupancy was down 15% of last December. Mr. Reil commented that the number of room nights blocked is deceptive because room night blocks are not always used. He said that some visitors have rewards plans with different hotel flags and other guests use Bed & Breakfast establishments or Air B&B's. Mr. Reil stated that definite bookings for the Convention Center include ExcipientFest 2017, Swarovski 2016 Touchtone Crystal sales meeting, Airports Council International 2017 JumpStart Conference and Share, Inc., 2017 Summer Meeting.

Mr. Reil reported that the sales team had traveled to Washington, DC and hosted four prospective customers at Ford's Theater for A Christmas Carol and conducted four additional sales calls while in the area. While in Baltimore Maryland, the team exhibited at the

Annual IAEE Expo Expo Tradeshow with SMG and RICC. The sales team was also in Dedham, MA to participate in the New England Society of CVB's event. Ms. Adamo noted that the CVB is collaborating with the Dunk and the Authority on the RI Flower Show marketing.

DUNKIN' DOUNTS CENTER

Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center events. Ms. Cohen presented highlights of upcoming events at the Dunk. She reported that aside from basketball and hockey, Jeff Dunham will be here in January and Monster Jam in February. Following the NCAA Basketball Tournament we have the Harlem Globetrotters in March. Cirque du Soleil, Janet Jackson and the Awakening Conference are all in June. Cohen presented a report on internet usage and where interest is coming from. Mr. MacDonald asked about tickets that are fraudulent that are purchased or offered on line. Ms. Cohen stated that a problem occurs when the tickets are not purchased from authorized sellers. Ms. Cohen said that some unscrupulous web-sites advertise tickets to events that have not been booked, the Marvel event for an example, or others that will attempt to inform the public that a show is sold out but you can get tickets through them. Mr. Lepore stated that Congress is working on Federal Legislation that will curb this abuse.

CONVENTION CENTER

Mr. McGinn was asked to present the report for the Convention Center. Mr. McGinn was pleased to report that the Convention Center had surpassed their goal for the year. Mr. Buonanno asked Mr. McGinn to prepare a report stating what expansion would mean to the facility. Mr. McGinn stated that the large shows that we currently have use the majority of the space in the buildings and that eliminates the opportunity to book more than one event in the facility.

Also ComicCon and Cheerleaders are outgrowing the space that we have and could look to other venues. Mr. Lepore reported that it has been decided that the Journal Building is not practical. He stated that groups want to be in the same building even if the walk is only across the street. Mr. Lepore noted that Vision III had provided their concept of what could be done using some space from the garage. Mr. Lepore noted that we would be giving up about sixteen parking spaces for stairs and 200 less spaces in the garage. Mr. Lepore noted that the parcel behind the building may become useful to us. Mr. McCarvill said that we need to compete with facilities the size of Louisville, Cincinnati, etc. He said that Vision II idea looks good. Mr. Lepore said that we can't grow without more space. Mr. Hirsh asked if the hotel would have any issues with this plan. Mr. Lepore said they might but the rooms that would be affected have other windows.

VETS

Mr. Gravison's Power Point Presentation began with a slide on attendance and income for the VETS and continued with insights and analytics. Mr. Gravison presented the VETS upcoming schedule and included a list of special events. He reported that Peppa Pig and Straight No Chaser are almost sold out. Mr. Gravison noted that we are making a name for ourselves in the place to be for entertainment for younger audiences. Shows like Peppa Pig and Daniel Tigers Neighborhood do very well at the VETS. Photos of the parking lot that VETS patrons can take advantage of during off hours of the State workers. Mr. Gravison also included a picture of the Encore Lounge that will be opening soon.

Mr. Buonanno thanked everyone for all of their hard work and asked if there was any further business. Hearing none he looked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. MacDonald and seconded by Mr. Hirsh it was unanimously

VOTED: to adjourn at 1:50 PM